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Resumed organizational session for 1996

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 3 May 1996, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire)

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ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS (continued)

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS (continued) (E/1996/2/Add.1)

International Narcotics Control Board (continued)

The PRESIDENT recalled that, at its previous meeting, the Council had elected only four members to the International Narcotics Control Board, since neither the candidate from India nor the candidate from South Africa had received the required majority. A vote would be taken by secret ballot to elect one of those candidates.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Vargas de Mendiola (Costa Rica) and Mr. Bakala (Congo) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	52
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	52
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	52
Required majority:	27
Number of votes obtained:	
C. Chakrabarty (India)	30
Gabriel Lôtter (South Africa)	22

Having obtained the required majority, C. Chakrabarty (India) was elected a member of the International Narcotics Control Board.

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (continued) (E/1996/19 and Add.1)

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) said that as a result of a recount requested by a member of the Council, it had been ascertained that a mistake had been made in the counting of the ballots and that Abdessatar Grissa (Tunisia), having received the required majority, had been elected to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Since no other candidate had received the required majority, the Council had to choose between the candidates

from the two countries that had received the most votes: Ariranga Govindasamy Pillay (Mauritius) and Lucian Tibaruha (Uganda).

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hadjiyski (Bulgaria) and Ms. Bosheck (Germany) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	54
Invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	54
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	52
Required majority:	27
Number of votes obtained:	
Ariranga Govindasamy Pillay (Mauritius)	36
Lucian Tibaruha (Uganda)	16

Having obtained the required majority, Ariranga Govindasamy Pillay (Mauritius) was elected a member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Committee for Programme and Coordination (E/1996/L.8)

The PRESIDENT said he had been informed that the Group of Western European and other States had endorsed three candidates, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and that the Group of African States had endorsed four candidates: Cameroon, Congo, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) said that the Group of Asian States had four members to be elected and had endorsed the candidates from Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Thailand. The Group of Eastern European States had three members to be elected and there were four non-endorsed candidates: Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Ukraine. The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had four members to be elected and had endorsed the candidacies of Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua and Trinidad and Tobago.

The PRESIDENT said that, since the number of nominations was equal to or less than the number of vacancies to be filled by African States, Asian States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States, he would take it that the Council wished to submit for election by the

General Assembly at its fifty-first session all the nominations proposed from those States.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that, since there were more candidates from the Group of Eastern European States than there were vacancies, he would take it that the Council wished to forward to the General Assembly the names submitted by that Group and request the General Assembly to carry out the elections for the three vacant seats.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that the observer for Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, would inform the Council of the candidates who had been nominated by that Group to the functional commissions and other bodies.

Commission on Human Settlements (E/1996/L.9)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were five vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia and Zambia.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia and Zambia were elected members of the Commission on Human Settlements by acclamation.

Commission for Social Development (E/1996/L.6)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were two vacancies for African States, and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Malawi and South Africa.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Malawi and South Africa were elected members of the Commission for Social Development by acclamation.

Commission on the Status of Women (E/1996/L.6)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were three vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Ethiopia, Ghana and Morocco.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Ethiopia, Ghana and Morocco were elected members of the Commission on the Status of Women by acclamation.

Commission on Sustainable Development (E/1996/L.6)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia), said that there were four vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Djibouti, Egypt, the Niger and the Sudan.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Djibouti, Egypt, the Niger and the Sudan were elected members of the Commission on Sustainable Development by acclamation.

Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (E/1996/L.5)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were two vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Cape Verde and Nigeria.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Cape Verde and Nigeria were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund by acclamation.

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (E/1996/L.11)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were two vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Guinea and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, since the number of candidates proposed by the Group of African States was equal to the number of vacancies for that Group, those candidates should be elected by acclamation.

It was so decided.

Guinea and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya were elected members of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund by acclamation.

Executive Board of the World Food Programme

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that the African States wished to request a postponement of the election to fill the Group's vacancies in order to consider the candidacies further.

The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council agreed to postpone the election to fill the vacancies for the Group of African States on the Executive Board of the World Food Programme.

It was so decided.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (E/1996/L.6)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were eight vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Lesotho, the Sudan, Swaziland, Tunisia and Zambia. The Group wished to request a postponement of the election to fill the remaining three vacancies until a later date.

The PRESIDENT suggested that the five candidates endorsed by the Group of African States should be elected by acclamation and that the election to fill the remaining three vacancies should be postponed.

It was so decided.

Lesotho, the Sudan, Swaziland, Tunisia and Zambia were elected members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice by acclamation.

Commission on Human Rights (E/1996/L.6)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that there were four vacancies for African States and that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Cape Verde, Mozambique, South Africa and Zaire.

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) said that the Council had received a note verbale dated 3 May 1996 from the Permanent Mission of Mauritania to the United Nations announcing that that country was submitting its name as a candidate for a vacancy on the Commission on Human Rights.

Accordingly, there were four endorsed candidates as well as the candidacy of Mauritania.

Mr. OULD ELY (Observer for Mauritania) said that his country had put forward its candidacy for the Commission in February 1996. Mauritania was not a candidate for any other vacancy in 1996 and had always demonstrated a spirit of good will in such matters. Nevertheless, the manner in which the vacancies had been allocated at the regional level was highly questionable, and consensus had not been reached in the Group of African States. Accordingly, Mauritania wished to maintain its candidacy for a vacancy on the Commission.

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that, although Mauritania had put forward its candidacy in February, the Group of African States had not endorsed it.

Mr. LEAO MONTEIRO (Observer for Cape Verde) said that his country's candidacy had been endorsed by the Group of African States in accordance with established criteria. Cape Verde had never been a member of the Commission and was not currently a member of any other body of the Council.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sorcar (Bangladesh) and Mr. Žebrakovský (Czech Republic) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot:

Number of ballot papers:	54
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	54
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	54
Required majority:	28
Number of votes obtained:	
Cape Verde	48
Mauritania	16
Mozambique	50
South Africa	48
Zaire	46

Having obtained the required majority, Cape Verde, Mozambique, South Africa and Zaire were elected members of the Commission on Human Rights.

Commission on Population and Development (continued) (E/1996/L.6)

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) said that a number of delegations had drawn attention to the question of staggering the ending dates of the terms of office of the members of the Commission on Population and Development so that some members would serve for three years, some for two years and some for one year. In February 1996 the Council had agreed to increase the Commission's membership by 20 members. At that time, it had elected 15 additional members and had postponed the election of five members from African States. Since the Council had just elected the five members from African States at the previous meeting, the 20 new vacancies had been filled.

It had been pointed out, however, that the term of office of Commission members was in fact four years, so that the staggered terms should have been four years, three years and two years. If the Council so agreed, the election at the previous meeting of candidates who were to begin terms on 1 January 1997 would be considered void and another election would be held bearing in mind that the members elected would be serving for four years, three years or two years.

Mr. SINGH (India) said that the issue should be given further thought before action was taken.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council would have to defer taking a decision on the matter until a subsequent meeting.

Mr. VAUGHN-FENN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation needed a little more time to consider the very important points made by the Secretariat and the representative of India. He agreed with the President that the Council could take a decision on the matter at a subsequent meeting.

The PRESIDENT suggested that, in order to give members sufficient time to consider the matter more thoroughly, it should be taken up during the substantive session.

It was so decided.

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (E/1996/L.10)

Mrs. CHIGAGA (Observer for Zambia) said that the African States were nominating Gabon, Kenya, Malawi and Namibia to fill four of the five vacancies on the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting allotted to those States. Elections for the fifth

vacancy should be postponed until the Group of African States had nominated a candidate.

The PRESIDENT said he would take it that the Council wished to elect Gabon, Kenya, Malawi and Namibia to fill four of the five vacancies allotted to the Group of African States and to postpone the election to fill the fifth vacancy until such time as the Group nominated a candidate.

It was so decided.

Mr. LADSOUS (France) said that his delegation was very dissatisfied at the grave irregularities in linguistic usage which had marked the current session of the Council. Notwithstanding the serious financial difficulties facing the Organization, the General Assembly had reaffirmed at its previous session that practices relating to the use of languages must be respected and that delegations whose working language was not English must be able to work in their language.

Unfortunately, at the current session, delegations had, in a spirit of cooperation and in order not to impede the work of the Council, agreed to take decisions on documents issued only in English, a language which some members did not understand. The Secretariat was not meeting its obligations under the Council's rules of procedure and that blatant violation of the principle of language equality in connection with the work of one of the main organs of the United Nations was absolutely unacceptable to his delegation. Financial considerations were no longer an acceptable justification, and his delegation wished to protest as vigorously as possible.

The PRESIDENT endorsed the statement made by the representative of France. In agreeing to work in a language other than his own working language he had simply sought to ensure that the Council made optimum use of the time available to it and conducted its elections. He hoped that the Secretariat would honour its assurances to him that a similar situation would not occur at the Council's forthcoming substantive session.

Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) endorsed the statement made by the representative of France and said she hoped that that situation would not be repeated. It was only logical that in such an important body as the Economic and Social Council all delegations should not only be able to use their working languages but should also be able to obtain documentation in those languages.

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council) announced that a recount of the ballots cast in the election of Asian States to the Executive Board of UNICEF had resulted in a slight modification in the figures. Indonesia had received 42 votes, Oman 35 votes, Sri Lanka 30 votes and the Islamic Republic of Iran 1 vote. That did not affect the election of Indonesia and Oman to the Executive Board.

The Council needed to take a decision concerning the staggering of the terms of office of the Commission on Population and Development.

Mr. HALLAK (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that when the Council examined candidacies in the future, they should give serious consideration to the need to respect the principle of equitable geographical distribution and ensure the broadest possible representation of member States. Unfortunately, there were a number of large countries in Asia that wished to have permanent seats on the Commission on Human Rights and other bodies, despite the desires of a number of smaller countries to be represented also. He fervently hoped that the Council would give serious consideration to ensuring that the legitimate rights of underrepresented or unrepresented States in all geographical groups would be taken into account in cases where agreement on all the candidacies in all the regional groups had been impossible.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The PRESIDENT declared the resumed organizational session of the Council for 1996 closed.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.